2016-111

Regional Parks System Equity Toolkit Recommendations

Raintry Salk, PhD

Regional Parks and Natural Resources Unit

Lisa Tabor

CultureBrokers

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
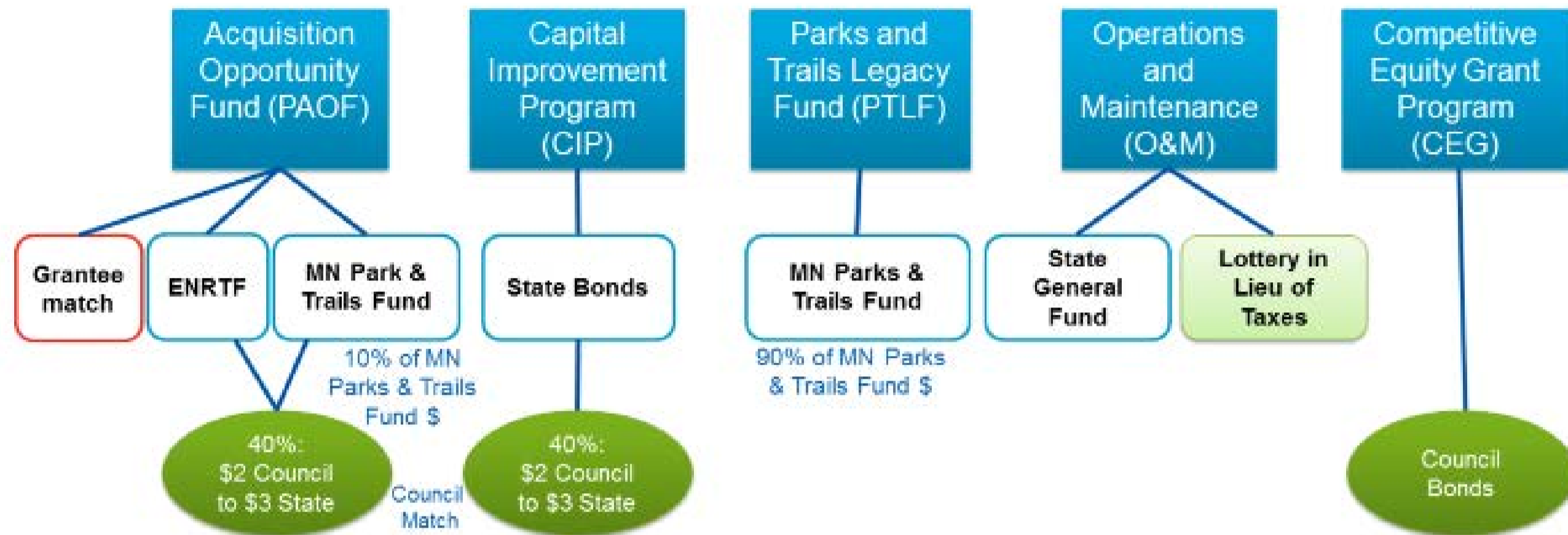
Background

- *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*
  - 13 equity-related policy commitments
    - Regional Parks System equity toolkit
  - "The Council and the Regional Parks and Natural Resources unit staff will work with in close collaboration with regional park implementing agencies, partners, community based organizations, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders to develop a Regional Parks System equity toolkit" (p. 99)

METROPOLITAN
C O U N C I L

Regional Parks & Natural Resources Grant Programs

Acquisition Opportunity Fund (PAOF)

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Parks and Trails Legacy Fund (PTLF)

Operations and Maintenance (O&M)

Competitive Equity Grant Program (CEG)

Grantee match

ENRTF

MN Park & Trails Fund

State Bonds

MN Parks & Trails Fund

State General Fund

Lottery in Lieu of Taxes

10% of MN Parks & Trails Fund $

90% of MN Parks & Trails Fund $

40%: $2 Council to $3 State

Council Match

40%: $2 Council to $3 State

Council Bonds

	PAOF	CIP	PTLF	O&M	CEG
Distribution	- 1st come, 1st served - Policy Plan	- Formula in Policy Plan	- Formula in Statute - Policy Plan	- Formula in Statute	- Competitive
Eligible Uses	- Acquisition & acquisition-related costs - Special circumstances	- Primarily for development; can be used for acquisition - Activity outcomes with 10+ year lifespans	- See the Parks and Trails Legacy Plan	- Operations and maintenance expenses only	- Development, redevelopment or acquisition - Projects that strengthen equitable usage
Governance	- Policy plan - State funding rules - Appropriation language	- Projects on list - MMB requirements - Appropriation language	- Projects on list - MMB requirements - Appropriation language & statutory language	- Session appropriations - Pass-through funds - Lottery proceeds may not meet forecast	- Policy plan - Details yet to be developed

Legend

Grant Program

State Fund

Council Bond

Grantee match

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

Toolkit Use

- *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*
  - **Completed** by regional park implementing agencies
    - CIP/PTLF grant requests
  - **Used** by MPOSC and the Council to evaluate project lists
    - Intent: Council involvement in reviewing and assessing the ranked list of proposed projects
      - In some cases, the Council may opt to reprioritize an agencies project list

- Note: toolkit will not used for screening purposes, determine funding eligibility, or alter an agency's share of their CIP or PTLF funds.

METROPOLITAN
C O U N C I L

01 EQUITY TOOLKIT
Improving Regional Parks System Performance

TOOLKIT GOAL

Eventually, implementing agencies and the Met Council should be able to answer at any give time:

- What is the proposed project's equity performance?

- Will the proposed project perform as well as it could against equity measures?

- How do we know?

- What (and how) should the proposed project improve or change?

TOOLKIT DEVELOPMENT

- Regional Park Implementing Agencies

- Regional Park System Partners

- Community-based Organizations

- Advocacy Groups

+ Other Stakeholder Groups
  - Users
  - Vendors
  - Anyone with a stake in the success of the regional park system

Bring me in early, I'm your partner.
Bring me in late, I'm your judge.

- Process Design: Making It Work

2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan

THREE STRATEGIC CONVERSATIONS

- Building Understanding (March 8)

- Shaping Choices (March 29 & April 19)

- Making Decisions (virtual, May 11 – 27)

Equity Toolkit Participants

Three Sessions   n = 55 unique persons
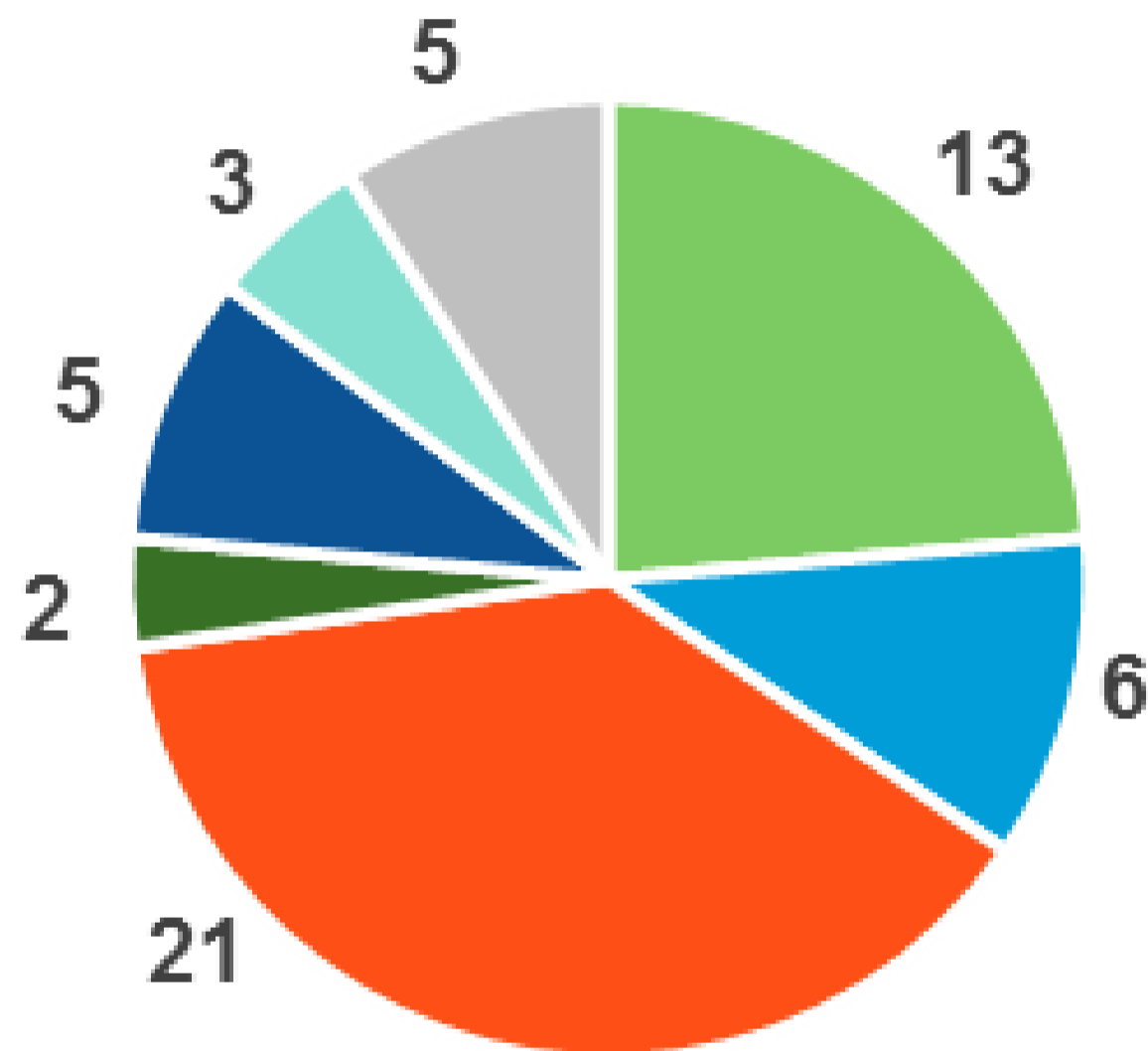
Legend:
- Advocate
- Met Council Staff
- Park Agency Staff
- Park User
- Partner
- Policy Advisor
- Vendor

Regional Parks Equity Toolkit

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Public

- Website
- EventBrite registration
- E-Newsletter

Private

- Written Comments
- Discussion Board
- Interpersonal conversations
- Survey for Making Decisions

Help build an equitable parks future for our region.

MORE INFORMATION >>

01 Equity Toolkit

Ambassador Program

RECOMMENDATION DEVELOPMENT

1. Input from session and communication channel participants
    > 250 suggestions

    > 150 comments
2. Environmental scan; various resources
    - Thrive MSP 2040
    - GARE Racial Equity Toolkit
    - CDC Parks & Trails Health Impact Assessment
    - Equitable Development Principles & Scorecard 2.0
3. Results of survey on first draft of recommendations
    7 sets of suggested changes
4. CultureBrokers expertise
5. Review final recommendations with Council staff
6. Survey Equity Toolkit participants about recommendations
7. Make recommendations to MPOSC and Council

KEY LEARNING & CONSIDERATIONS

- No one tool can do everything well. Variety of tools are needed to:
  - Inventory what is happening
  - Monitor outcomes
  - Institutionalize successes

- Implementing agencies do not currently measure all project or program outcomes in ways that help them strengthen regional parks equity.

- Tool users (people at agencies and Met Council) will not all be experts.

- Tools are an investment. The toolkit should grow and adapt with users' needs and capabilities.

- There are people who have been long ready for measurable change.

The Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MET COUNCIL

1. The **toolkit** launches with an inventory function and consists of four distinct "tools".

   - Set of equity questions answered by agencies.
   - Report of the responses to equity lens questions.
   - Set of questions to guide analysis of the responses.
   - Set of user sessions to help agencies, Met Council staff and MPOSC understand, use and advance.

2. There is a blueprint for continuous improvement and development of the toolkit.

3. Plan to address the Additional Recommendations and share that with the Equity Toolkit participants.

TOOLKIT FUNCTION (BIENNIUM #1)
USE AN EQUITY LENS TO INVENTORY PROJECTS

Parks Implementing Agencies	EQUITY TOOLKIT (1.0)	Metropolitan Council	State of MN
• **Complete Grant Application, to include equity questions** • **Receive Equity Inventory Report** • **Make Appropriate Adjustments**	• Provide Regional Demographic Data • Collect Agency Information • Generate Equity Inventory Report	• Receive Equity Inventory Report • Analyze Report using equity questions • Recommend Project Priorities	• Will Receive Equity Inventory Report

GRANT APPLICATION
(Park Implementing Agencies)

Answer five equity questions:

1. What are the population numbers for the following groups within your agency's jurisdiction?

2. Which populations in Q1 are currently underserved by the regional parks system?

3. Which of the underserved populations identified in Q2 will this project serve better?

4. What specific aspects of this project will help to better serve the target populations identified in Q3?

5. Exactly how will you verify the target populations identified in Q3 are better served?

1. What are the population numbers for the following groups within your agency's jurisdiction?

A. TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS

B. RACE & HISPANIC/LATINO ORIGIN (% BY CATEGORY)

C. INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

D. DISABILITY CHARACTERISTICS (% BY CATEGORY)

E. AGE (% BY CATEGORY)

F. NATIVE & FOREIGN BORN (% BY CATEGORY)

This data will be auto-populated from the most current Census or American Community Survey. Park Implementing Agencies that cross multiple counties would auto-populate with aggregated figures.

Purpose: Understand current demographic reality. Use to compare against proposed project plans and outcomes.

SAMPLE RESPONSE
Auto-populated
1. What are the population numbers for the following groups within your agency's jurisdiction?

A. TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS

B. RACE & HISPANIC/LATINO ORIGIN (%)

White

Black or African American

American Indian and Alaska Native

Asian

Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Is-lander

Some Other Race

Hispanic or Latino

Not Hispanic or Latino

C. INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

Households with earnings (#)

Mean earnings ($)

With Social Security income (%)

With cash public assistance income (%)

With retirement income (%)

With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits (%

D. DISABILITY CHARACTERISTICS (%)

Disability status

Hearing difficulty

Vision difficulty

Cognitive difficulty

Ambulatory difficulty

Self-care difficulty

Independent living difficulty

E. AGE (%)

Under 5 years

5 to 17 years

18 to 24 years

25 to 44 years

45 to 54 years

55 to 64 years

65 to 74 years

75 to 84 years

85 years and over

F. NATIVE & FOREIGN BORN (%)

Native born

Foreign born

English only

Language other than English

Speak English less than "very well"

2. Which populations in Q1 are currently underserved by the regional parks system? (Refer to the 2016 Regional Parks & Trails Survey. Check all that apply.)

Purpose: Understand current demographic gaps in service opportunity, access and/or quality. Use to compare against proposed project plans and outcomes.

SAMPLE RESPONSE
Auto-populated

2. Which of populations in Q1 are currently underserved by the regional parks system?

Underserved Populations	Percent
Black or African American	
American Indian and Alaska Native	
Asian	
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	
Some Other Race	
Hispanic or Latino	
Hearing difficulty	
Vision difficulty	
Cognitive difficulty	
Ambulatory difficulty	
Self-care difficulty	
Independent living difficulty	

Actual data pending 2016 Regional Parks & Trails Survey

3. Which of the underserved populations identified in Q2 will this project serve better? (Check all that apply)

List of checkboxes pre-populated with responses piped from question #2.

Purpose: Identify specific underserved groups that are expected to be served by the project. Use to compare against proposed project plans and outcomes. Recognize that those targeted groups may vary by park or trail.

SAMPLE RESPONSE (A)

3. Which of the underserved populations identified above is this project designed to serve better?

Underserved Populations	Check Appropriate Boxes
Black or African American	
American Indian and Alaska Native	
Asian	
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	
Some Other Race	
Hispanic or Latino	
Hearing difficulty	
Vision difficulty	
Cognitive difficulty	
Ambulatory difficulty	X
Self-care difficulty	
Independent living difficulty	

SAMPLE RESPONSE (B)

3. Which of the underserved populations identified above is this project designed to serve better?

Underserved Populations	Check Appropriate Boxes
Black or African American	X
American Indian and Alaska Native	X
Asian	X
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	X
Some Other Race	X
Hispanic or Latino	X
Hearing difficulty	
Vision difficulty	
Cognitive difficulty	
Ambulatory difficulty	
Self-care difficulty	
Independent living difficulty	

4. What specific aspects of this project will help to better serve the target populations identified in Q3?

Open text response

Purpose: Validate the project plan has components that are effective in serving the target populations.

SAMPLE RESPONSE (A)

Provide ADA compatible restroom facilities with design features that extend beyond minimum requirements.

SAMPLE RESPONSE (B)

Provide culturally relevant programming to racially and ethnically diverse audiences through forging partnerships with local organizations.

Refers to Session 3 questions #1 - 6, 8 – 12, 14 – 16, 19, 22 – 24, 26, 28 – 30, 32 – 40, 43, 45 – 50.

5. Exactly how will you verify the target populations identified in Q3 are better served?

Open text response

Purpose: Validate the agency or project has a method of measuring progress toward serving the target populations.
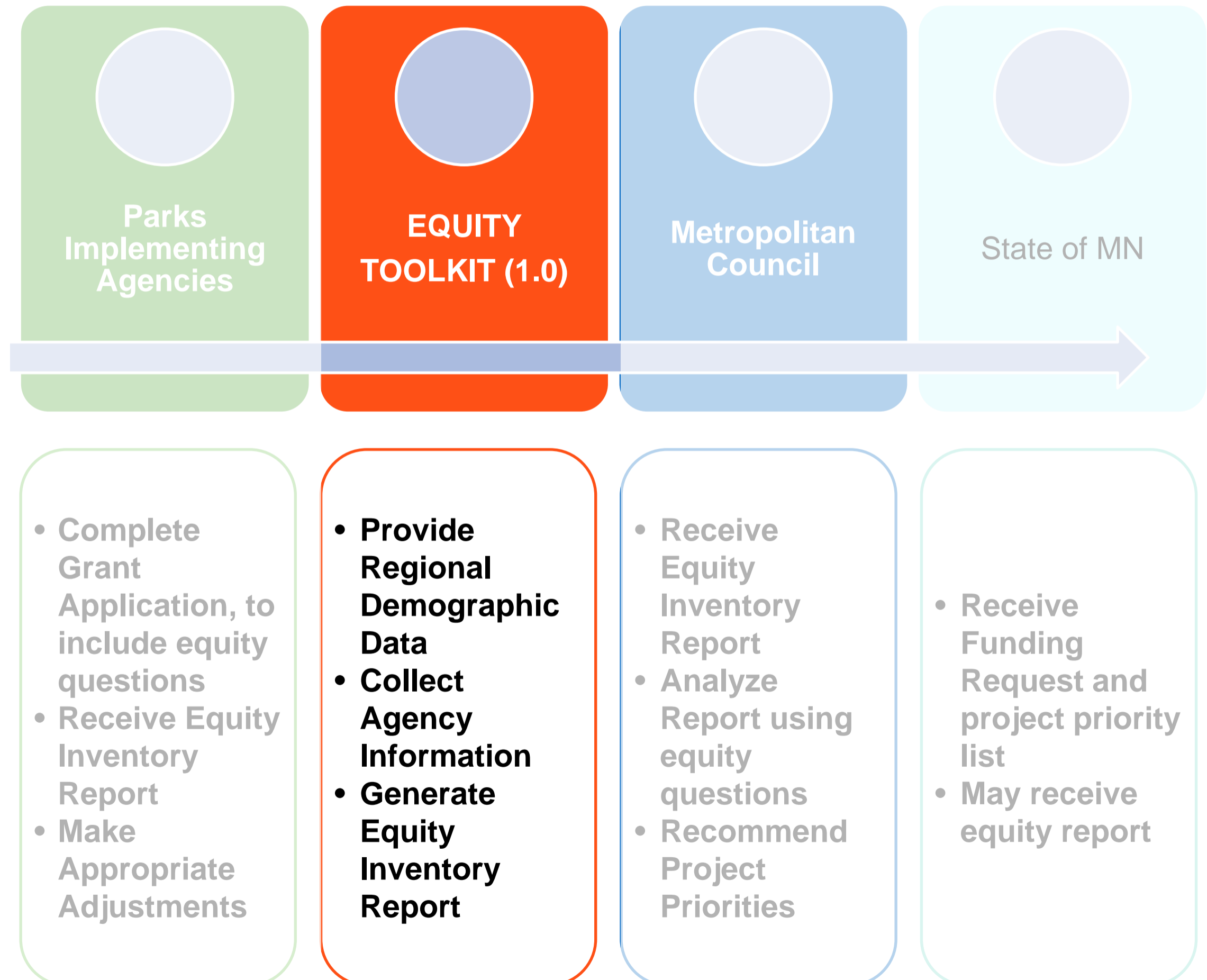
SAMPLE RESPONSE (A)

An observational pre and post test conducted before construction and after construction.

SAMPLE RESPONSE (B)

- # of new partnerships formed with local organizations
- # of culturally relevant programs developed provided
- # of program participants by race and ethnicity

TOOLKIT FUNCTION (BIENNIUM #1)

USE AN EQUITY LENS TO INVENTORY PROJECTS

Parks Implementing Agencies	EQUITY TOOLKIT (1.0)	Metropolitan Council	State of MN
• Complete Grant Application, to include equity questions • Receive Equity Inventory Report • Make Appropriate Adjustments	• **Provide Regional Demographic Data** • **Collect Agency Information** • **Generate Equity Inventory Report**	• Receive Equity Inventory Report • Analyze Report using equity questions • Recommend Project Priorities	• Receive Funding Request and project priority list • May receive equity report

EQUITY INVENTORY REPORT - SAMPLE

Implementing Agency	Q1* Jurisdiction Demographics (pre-populated)	Q2 Underserved in Regional Parks (pre-populated)	Q3 Target Population	Q4 Project Aspect	Q5 Verification
A	AMBULATORY DIFFICULTY = 4.1%	AMBULATORY DIFFICULTY = 1%	Ambulatory difficulty	Provide ADA compatible restroom facilities with design features that extend beyond minimum requirements.	An observational pre and post test conducted before construction and after construction.
B	• BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN = 4.4% • AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE = 0.7% • ASIAN = 3.9% • NATIVE HAWAIIAN & OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER = .008% • SOME OTHER RACE = 1.4% • HISPANIC OR LATINO = 3.6%	• BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN = 2.5% • AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE = 0.5% • ASIAN = 4.0% • NATIVE HAWAIIAN & OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER = 0% • SOME OTHER RACE = 0.1% • HISPANIC OR LATINO = 2.3%	• Black or African American • American Indian and Alaska Native • Asian • Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander • Some Other Race • Hispanic or Latino	Provide culturally relevant programming to racially and ethnically diverse audiences through forging partnerships with local organizations.	• # of new partnerships formed with local organizations • # of culturally relevant programs developed provided • # of program participants by race and ethnicity

TOOLKIT FUNCTION (BIENNIUM #1)
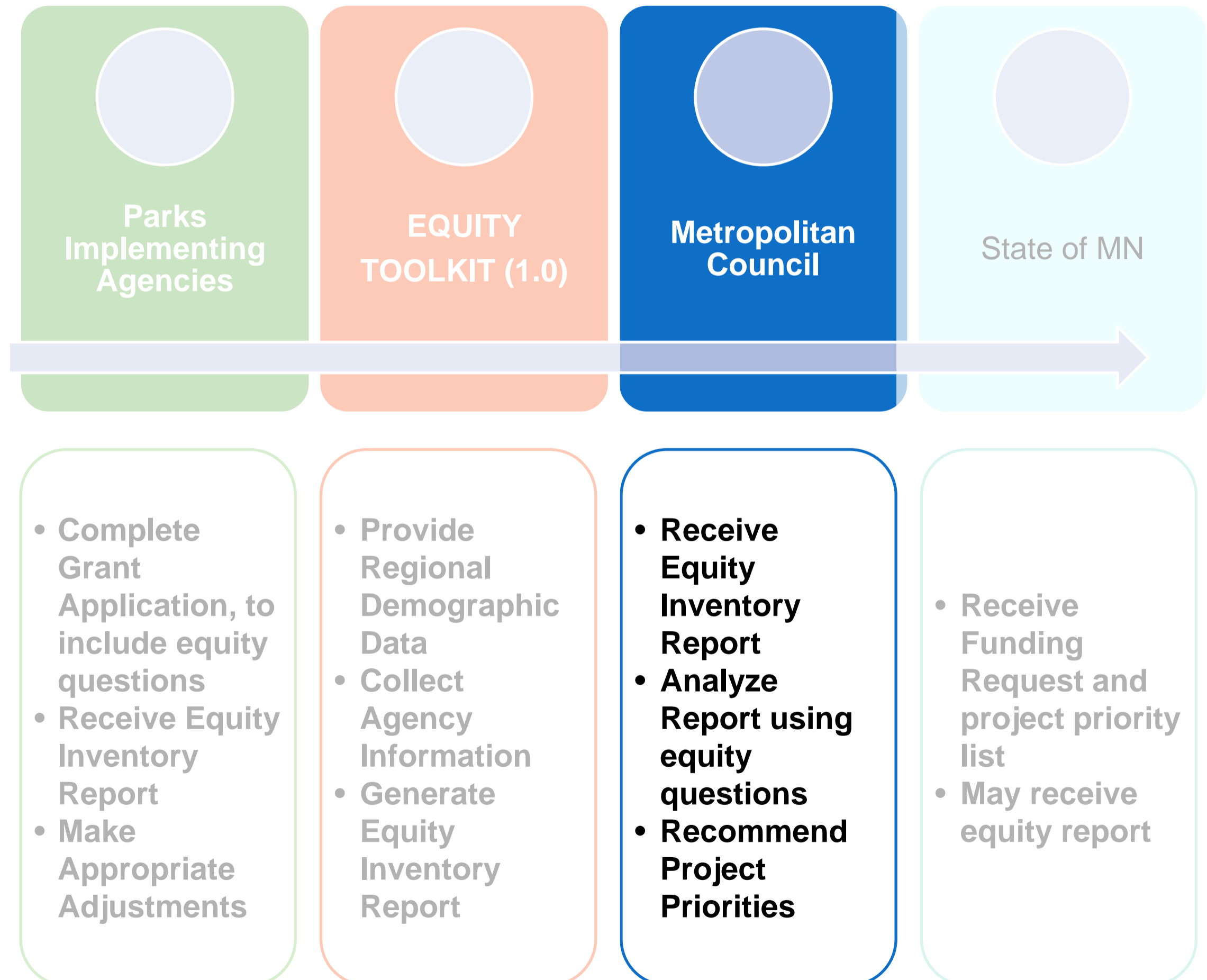## USE AN EQUITY LENS TO INVENTORY PROJECTS

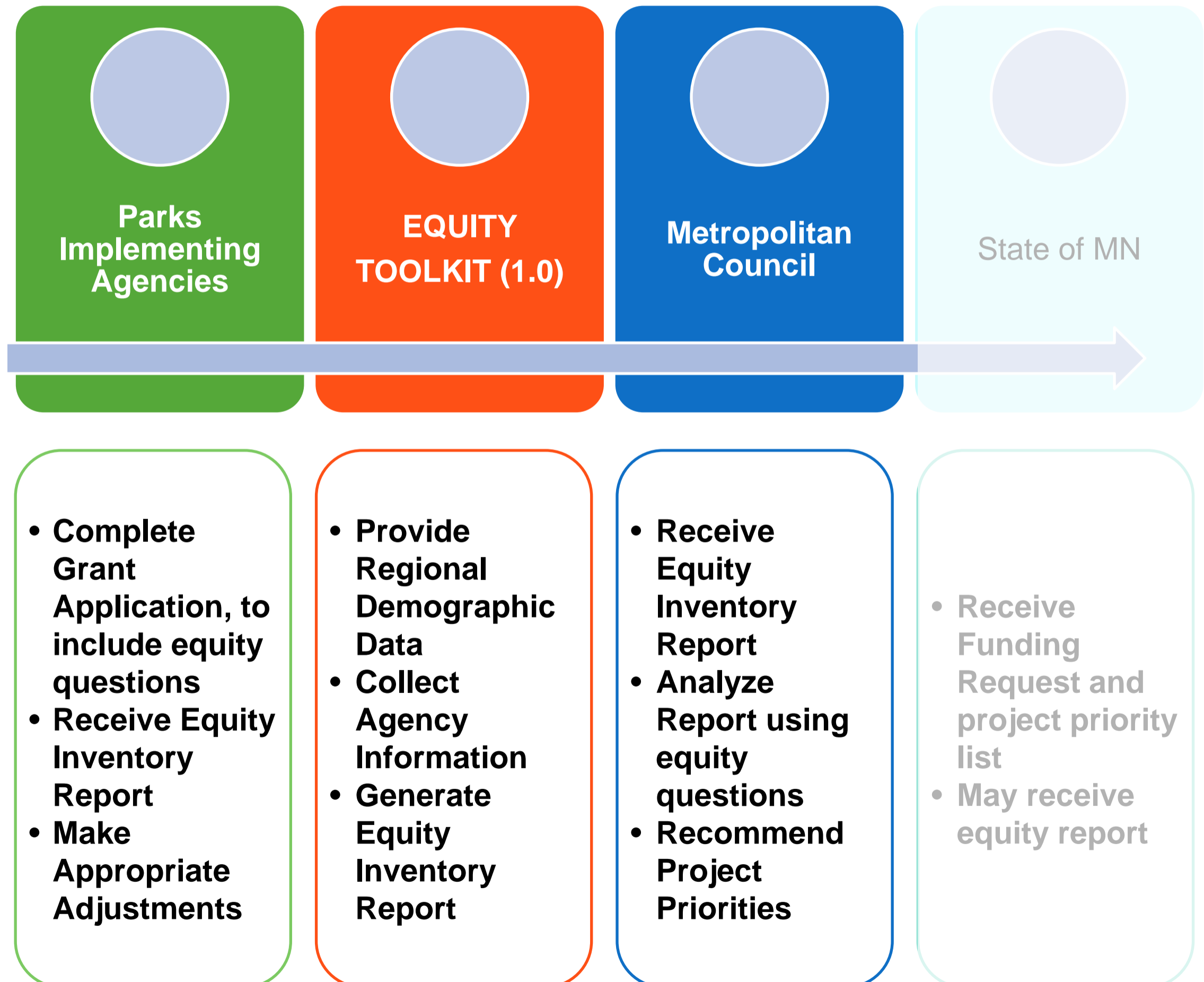| Parks Implementing Agencies	EQUITY TOOLKIT (1.0)	Metropolitan Council	State of MN
• Complete Grant Application, to include equity questions • Receive Equity Inventory Report • Make Appropriate Adjustments	• Provide Regional Demographic Data • Collect Agency Information • Generate Equity Inventory Report	• Receive Equity Inventory Report • Analyze Report using equity questions • Recommend Project Priorities	• Receive Funding Request and project priority list • May receive equity report

CONSIDERING THE INVENTORY REPORT
(MPOSC and Council)

Use five equity questions to analyze the report:

1. What populations are the currently underserved by the regional parks system?

2. Which of the underserved populations identified above are being served better by these proposed projects? What seem to be trends across the region? Are there strengths, gaps?

3. What interesting / promising approaches to better serving targeted populations do you see within these projects?

4. What does this tell you about where the regional park system is now and where it may need to go in the future?

5. What suggestions would you make?

TOOLKIT FUNCTION (BIENNIUM #1)

USE AN EQUITY LENS TO INVENTORY PROJECTS

Parks Implementing Agencies	EQUITY TOOLKIT (1.0)	Metropolitan Council	State of MN

Parks Implementing Agencies	EQUITY TOOLKIT (1.0)	Metropolitan Council	State of MN
• Complete Grant Application, to include equity questions • Receive Equity Inventory Report • Make Appropriate Adjustments	• Provide Regional Demographic Data • Collect Agency Information • Generate Equity Inventory Report	• Receive Equity Inventory Report • Analyze Report using equity questions • Recommend Project Priorities	• Receive Funding Request and project priority list • May receive equity report

TOOLKIT USER SESSIONS

Implementing Agencies, Met Council Staff & MPOSC:

• Learn and use the toolkit.

• Share toolkit results and insights.

• Discuss approaches, good practices, successes.

• Engage in continuously improving the current tools.

• Co-create new tools to add to the toolkit.

• Understand and explore emerging equity issues and advances as they relate to the Regional Park system.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MET COUNCIL

1. The toolkit consists of:
   – Set of "equity lens" questions answered by agencies.
   – Report of the responses to equity lens questions.
   – Set of "equity analysis" questions to guide conversation about the responses.
   – Set of "user sessions" to help agencies, Met Council staff and MPOSC understand, use and progress.

2. There is a blueprint for continuous improvement and development of the toolkit.

3. Plan to address the Additional Recommendations and share that with the Equity Toolkit participants.

BLUEPRINT FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
(Led by Equity Toolkit User Group)

1. After Biennium 1, take stock of the inventory of project analyses. Identify areas of strength, weakness and opportunity.

2. Make adjustments to the toolkit – adapt/add components; require specific measurable goals.

3. Implement adjustments in Biennium 2.

4. Repeat 1 – 3 for future years.

Eventually Your Well-developed Toolkit Could Provide:

- **Framework** for revealing implicit and explicit project impact on key areas of concern.

- **Pictures** of where and how a proposed project measurably performs on key aspects of equity.

- **Opportunity** to develop projects that better support equity.

- **Information** to help set priorities, establish and achieve meaningful equity goals, and determine immediate next steps.

PLAN TO ADDRESS ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EQUITY TOOLKIT PARTICIPANTS

- Eleven suggestions outside the scope of this equity toolkit project
  - Ensuring staff have adequate resources to actually deliver on the Regional Parks equity commitment.

  - Linking other Met Council divisions to support Regional Parks (i.e. ensuring public transit supports equitable regional park usage).

  - Aligning Regional Park System outcomes with other Met Council goals (i.e., Transit-oriented development, diverse vendor procurement, concentrated areas of poverty).

  - Finding additional ways to support implementing agencies in their role as front-line equity workers.

The Anticipated Impacts

IMPACTS ON COMMUNITIES

- Immediate increase on the level of visibility of underserved populations in the regional park system.

- Immediate increase on the ability of residents to see exactly what actions are being taken to consider and serve specific communities.

- Immediate increase on the levels of consideration for underserved populations in the regional park system.

- Long term increase on the level and quality of service to underserved populations in the regional park system.

- Long term improvement on the quality of life of all communities in the region.

IMPACTS ON IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES

- No impact on amount of grant funds allocated or awarded to agencies through Capital Improvement Program and Parks and Trails Legacy Fund.

- Immediate increase in time spent completing the relevant grant applications.

- Immediate increase in motivation and ability of agencies to use an equity lens as they develop and propose projects for funding.

- Potential immediate impact on priority ranking of park projects agencies propose for funding.

IMPACTS ON METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

- No impact on amount of grant funds allocated or awarded to agencies through Capital Improvement Program and Parks and Trails Legacy Fund.

- Potential immediate impact on priority ranking of park projects agencies propose for funding.

- Immediate increase in time spent by staff and commission in reviewing the relevant grant applications.

- Immediate increase on ability of staff and leaders to use an equity lens as they make decisions.

The Recommendations

CULTUREBROKERS RECOMMENDATION

1. The toolkit consists of:
   – Set of "equity lens" questions answered by agencies.
   – Report of the responses to equity lens questions.
   – Set of "equity analysis" questions to guide conversation about the responses.
   – Set of "user sessions" to help agencies, Met Council staff and MPOSC understand, use and progress.

2. There is a blueprint for continuous improvement and development of the toolkit.

3. Plan to address the Additional Recommendations and share that with the Equity Toolkit participants.

Staff Recommendation

That the Metropolitan Council accept the Regional Parks System Equity Toolkit recommendations and direct staff to begin use of the toolkit in the Capital Improvement Program and the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund grant program in the manner specified in the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan.*